

## RETREAT NOTES

Students' Retreat - St. Patrick Academy, Momence, Ill.,  
January 22, 23, 24, 1941.

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### PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTION

Welcome to this retreat in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. A retreat is really an advance rather than a retreat. An advance in what? In cleanliness of soul, beauty of character, nobility of conduct and of will? Yes, in all of these - however there is one advance which is absolutely necessary if this retreat is to be a success. If this is not attained, then the retreat will not have been an advance. This advance is an advance or increase in the love of God. A priest is a "G - man; a God-man, not a gun - man. I as a priest promote the cause of God. If I can make you love God more during this retreat, I shall have fulfilled my duty as a God-man or a G-man. Our slogan for this retreat will be the little prayer which we said before the opening of the retreat and which we shall say before each instruction. "Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I implore that I may ever love Thee more and more."

2. A retreat is a personal thing - something between your soul and Almighty God. You must push forward in the love of God. In order to get closer to our Friend of friends during this retreat, we need silence. How often two friends will get together and remain in silence simply enjoying the happiness of each other's presence. In retreat we withdraw from the world to be alone with God. We need silence in order to hear His voice. A retreat will be successful in proportion to the silence with which it is made. At first you will



find the silence boresome but as time goes on, it will grow upon you and in it you will find God.

3. We wish to make this a prayerful retreat. Come into the chapel as frequently as you can to pray. If you cannot find words to express your feelings, just remain silent in the presence of God. During the free time during the day, think over the things which will be said in the conferences.

4. After each conference, write out in a little note book the thoughts which struck you or the impressions which were made upon you. You cannot make these thoughts your own unless you write them out or talk them over with some one. Get into the habit of talking over your difficulties with the priest in the confessional. People do not use the priest sufficiently. They will go to a lawyer for their material interests or to a doctor for their physical ailments but they will not go to a priest for their spiritual ills. A priest is the only person who has had training in moral philosophy and the only one who really can help you in your spiritual difficulties. Give a priest the chance and the opportunity to tell you " the wisdom of the mind of Christ."

#### FIRST INSTRUCTION

I am going to tell you a little fairy story. We find that everybody likes fairy stories, not only the little ones but the grown-ups as well. Fairy stories give us a wonderful opportunity to recall deep spiritual truths.

I am certain that most of you have seen the movie of " THE WIZARD OF OZ." I shall briefly recall for you the main thoughts of the story and then show you how we are like the little girl who was searching for the Wizard of Oz.

The little girl in the story was dreaming of a beautiful Emerald City called Oz. She wished to



leave her own home where she found things dull and uninteresting and go into the world beyond where she would find the wonderful Wizard of Oz who with his magic power would turn all things into happiness and pleasure. Oneday she fell asleep and in her dream was carried to the land beyond . In her search for the Wizard of Oz, she met four characters, who like herself were in need of something. They, too, were searching for the Wizard of Oz who would help them in their need and give them what they wanted.

We are like the four characters she met. We, too, need help; we are not self-sufficient and independent. We need a Saviour to guide and help us and to lead us to our true home beyond - to Heaven. We are lost in this vale of tears and we need the Wonderful Wizard of Nazareth ~~the~~ guide us back home. Spiritually speaking we are all on relief. Let us now see how we are like the characters the little girl met.

1 - The scarecrow - The first character the little girl met was a scarecrow who had no brains. We, too, need brains. There are in reality only two classes of people in the world who seek for Christ, the really learned people, the Wise Men who sought for the Christ Child, and the poor simple people, as the shepherds. Really smart people know that they are ignorant, they know that they need God. Don't be of the second class or the middle group who think they know it all and need not Christ. The greatest of all sciences in the science of the saints. The most uncommon thing in the world is common sense. Let us have the common sense to realize that we need Christ and let us stay close to our Wonderful Wizard of Nazareth.

2 - The tin soldier - The second character the little girl met was a tin soldier who needed a heart. We, too, need a heart, a strong heart, a large heart, to love Christ. God made you to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him in this world and to be happy with



Him forever in the next. We need much love. Most of us are twice as selfish as we think we are. We have a perfect love of ourselves. There is nothing so blind as self-love. Self-love exaggerates what we do. In every case where we have difficulties with others, instead of blaming fifty percent on the other party and only fifty percent on ourselves, we are generally safe in admitting that we are really seventy-five percent guilty. Self-love can account for the other twenty-five percent. If we said no other prayer than the little ejaculation: " Lord, teach me how to love", we would be praying very well. Let us pray much and beg our Lord for the grace to come up close and remain close to the Sacred Heart of the Wizard of Nazareth.

3. - The lion who needed courage. Like the fearful lion whom the little girl met, we, too, need courage. There are more spiritual "Sissies" in the world now than there ever were at any time in the history of mankind. The conveniences brought about by modern science have made us soft and lazy. Recall the prayer said daily by the priest after Mass: " St. Michael defend us in battle." Life is really a battle and we need courage to fight it well. Those who suffer most are really the cowards - they suffer through their very fear. Fortitude is a cardinal virtue. You can no more go through life without courage than a door can swing without a hinge. The word " cardinal" means hinge - the cardinal moral virtues act like hinges supporting a door - they support us in our struggle throughout life. In our struggle to be courageous we must steer clear of discouragement commonly known as the " blues". The color blue is really made up of two other colors - yellow and green. Blues in the spiritual like are made up of the green of ignorance and the yellow of cowardice. Those who yield to the blues do not understand that life is a cross, that difficulties and troubles are really given us as spiritual opportunities to prove our love for Christ. If we say that a person is yellow we mean " they cannot take it." Our Lord said to Benigna Consolata that next to sin nothing should give her fear or anxiety as much as discouragement. "Next to sin, there is nothing you should fear as much as discouragement."



Remember sadness rhymes with badness. Father William Doyle, the saintly Jesuit who died in action during the World War, wrote to a friend the advice to look out for the three D's - the doctor, the devil, and the dumps. Gloominess, sadness and melancholy come from spiritual troubles. We must have more confidence in God. We need our Saviour to teach us to become courageous. Let us increase our confidence and our trust in the courageous Heart of the Wizard of Nazareth.

4. - The fourth character is really the little girl herself. Like her, we too, are searching for the one who will bring us happiness. The little girl found happiness in her own back yard. When she awoke from her dream, she realized how foolish she had been. Let us take time out today to be really happy. Happiness is really something inside of us - it is our way of looking at things. You have probably heard that "

" Two men looked out the prison bars,  
One found mud -  
The other found stars."

Happiness is a duty - it is within the scope of our own will. We can be happy at all times but we must accept all that God sends us as coming from a loving Father who wills only our good. The little girl on the road to the Emerald City had to find her way home. We, too, must find our way home. There is one " item " on our "must" list. We must save our souls. The best way to be sure to save our souls is to tie up and remain close to our Wonderful Wizard of Nazareth - the Wonderful Wizard of the Tabernacle.

#### SECOND INSTRUCTION - 11:00

A word of welcome to the public school students who are to come to this instruction each day. In making a retreat, you are really fulfilling a patriotic duty. The trouble with the world to-day is spiritual. The world has rejected Christ -



therefore we have Hitler; the world has rejected the Cross - therefore we have the swastika; the world has rejected Catholicism - therefore we have all the other isms - socialism, communism, and Nazi-ism.

In this instruction we are going to consider what we mean by religion, what religion really is. In recent years, there was a committee named to examine the life of Teresa Higginson who was a rural teacher in England, Wales and Ireland. She led a very holy life and her cause for beatification has already been brought up. The committee in examining her life examined it for four virtues which they consider the marks of a really Christian man or woman. We shall examine these four marks and see if we ourselves possess in any degree these four virtues and we shall see what we can do to obtain these necessary virtues.

#### 1 - Humility

Pride in the spiritual life is Public Enemy No. One. If I am proud, my miserable pride is a Fifth Columnist - the enemy within the gates - the enemy within my own heart. When we think of humility, we may recall Uriah Heep who was humble but despicable. This is not the pride we wish to have. Humility is a virtue which regulates our instinct to self-esteem and the desire for the esteem of others. We must have a certain amount of self-esteem, of confidence in ourselves, we must have a certain amount of self-respect and of personal dignity. All this is well and good but we must be careful not exaggerate it. Pride is an exaggerated self-esteem while vanity is an exaggerated desire for the esteem of others. Extremes are always wrong. Vanity may express itself by our spending too much time on our personal appearance or in an excessive fondness for compliments. We may recognize the symptom of pride in our life by egotism, stubbornness, lack of charity, insubordination, or disobedience. The proud person does not wish to obey others, does not wish to give in in an argument. He always thinks he is



right and the other person wrong. Once we become religious we must play "second fiddle" to God. God comes first - we come second. Proud people have stiff necks - they do not know how to bend easily. Intellectual pride is the worst form of pride. Beware of it. A strong man is one who knows he is weak. A proud man does not pray easily; he runs frequently and easily into the occasions of sin. His pride leads him to exaggerate his strength. Let us pray faithfully night and morning to the Meek and Gentle Christ asking Him to make us meek and humble of heart. "Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine.

## 2. - Virtue of patience.

Patience is a practical expression of charity. Life demands that we put up with people and that they put up with us. Let us ask our Lord for the grace to be a good "put - er - up -er!" Patience is hard to master or acquire because you have to conquer self in order to acquire it. We need patience with others, patience with self and patience with God. We should be a giver-in-er -; one who gives in ~~an~~ a disagreement or argument is greater than the one who refuses to give in. The latter may think he has won the argument but in the eyes of God, the former who gave in is really the victor.

## 3. - Virtue of obedience

Our obedience is manifested in our attitude to all authority. No one likes to obey and yet every one has to obey. We obey God when we obey our parents, our teachers and all other lawful authority. Let us be careful not to criticize our priests for whenever we criticize the Church officially we criticize the mind of Christ.

## 4 - Virtue of mortification

Mortification does not mean a "kill-joy" philosophy of life. It is similar to the pruning of a tree or the weeding of a garden. The bad branches are cut and removed the weeds dug up in the garden



in order that the tree may live and the flowers be more beautiful. So we, too, in mortifying our passions do so that our spiritual life may be re-vivified and made more pleasing to God. A good example of mortifying ourselves is that of refraining from eating candy during Lent. There are two forms of mortification - exterior and interior. The latter is much more difficult to perform and as a rule is not of our own choice. Mortification may be self-imposed or God-imposed. If we can learn to say "Yes, Father" to all that God sends us and learn to say if graciously, we are performing the best kind of mortification. If we base our happiness on mere physical sensation, then we are near the animal kingdom - we must learn to rise higher than our passions and learn to conquer them by mortification.

### THIRD INSTRUCTION - 2:30

During this instruction we shall consider a subject which is very old-fashioned - that of sin. As the fall of man came through a woman, so the rise of man should come through a woman. Women are spiritual leaders.

Sin always looks good. The devil does all he can to make sin attractive and glamorous. Hell means not to love any more. All in hell hate each other with a terrific and terrifying hatred. Eve sinned and then caused Adam to sin. We do something wrong - we sin and then we try to get others to commit the same sin. If we succeed in this, we feel that our own sin is not so great. If those who love God in this world had only one-half the qualities of those who sin, of their determination to lead others to follow them, we would be able to conquer the world. Let us see the effect of Adam's sin. When Adam was asked by almighty God why he had committed the sin, he answered that Eve had tempted him. Eve answered that the serpent had tempted her. This is what boys would call "passing the buck."



If we could only realize the great harm sin has caused in the world, the ocean of blood and the ocean of tears which it has brought about - and behind it all see the foul, leary face of the devil, how careful we would be not to commit sin. Greed, hatred, and pride cause all the trouble in the world. Sin never pays. Remember that the devil hates you with an awful hatred. It will make sin look attractive to you and then when you have committed it, he will make you see it as it actually is. We have a habit of saying that we "fall" into sin - this is not true, we do not fall - we jump into sin - we jump into it headlong. Mortal sin is spiritual suicide. Sin is a turning away from God. It is more like breaking a heart rather than breaking a law. It is the Heart of Christ which we break when we commit sin.

There are many mistaken notions concerning sin.  
1st - To think that everything is sinful. God's law is generous and reasonable. God does not want us to be in constant fear of Him and He does not demand the unreasonable.

2nd - To think that temptations are sins. This is not true - temptations are not sins. We are far closer to God after overcoming a temptation than we were before the temptation. Temptation may be the most exquisite suffering we have to endure during life. Temptations are "the courtship periods" between God and the soul. If we didn't have a chance to undergo temptations, we wouldn't have a chance to be perfected in His love. A thought enters the mind - so far no sin - then when the mind realizes the thought if it turns away from it, it had conquered the temptation. We can usually be certain that we did not yield to a temptation if we can remember that we prayed and that we had a feeling of annoyance or disgust. There is a good rule to follow in temptations.

1st - Be cheerful.

2nd - Be cheerful.

3rd - Be cheerful.



If the devil succeeds in making you gloomy or sad, he will succeed in making you yield to the temptation. God's grace is sufficient for us to withstand the temptation. Don't get "panicky" Be calm and quick. Quick to pray. Don't worry about temptation but be worried about yielding to discouragement. The devil has many ways of tempting us. He tells us that we will be young once only and to enjoy ourselves while we are young. He tells us to be a "regular" guy - regular from the Latin rule. Don't get "flat-tired." We say that a tire is flat when almost all of the air is out of it. The winner is the "flat tire" - not the saint. There is only one thing in life that is evil and that is sin. "It's a great life if you don't weaken."

#### FOURTH INSTRUCTION .. 4:00

Let us during this conference examine ourselves on a few points which are most essential.

- 1st - Am I faithful to my spiritual exercises?
- 2nd - Do I watch the beginnings of dangerous tendencies?
- 3rd - Do I keep busy with useful and ennobling occupations? - Watch your leisure hours.
- 4th - Do I look on the good side of people and things?

Catholics are usually optimists rather than pessimists. Let us watch ourselves for unkind thoughts. Being uncharitable is a matter of ignorance. Everything and everybody is essentially good. All of us have in us the makings of a saint. Men are lovable in themselves. Let us excuse the faults of others; they are spiritually ill. If we see someone who has a cancer or is physically crippled, we feel sorry for them and do what we can to help them. Let us do the same for those who are spiritually ill. Let us excuse their faults. I have



wished that I could re-arrange the stars in the heavens and if I could do so, I would re-arrange them to spell the words: "LET US BE KIND!" That boy or girl is kind who is able to see and appreciate the good in others. Everyone, no matter how bad he is, has his good side. Let us try to recognize this good side of all with whom we come in contact. The biggest scandal in the Church to-day is our lack of love for each other - our lack of charity.

You will probably recall studying in your history classes the code of Hammurabi - an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, etc. This must not be our standard. Our standard must be that of the heart. Charity is as important to society as the heart is to the body. Let our love for our neighbor be sincere, steadfast and constant, in memory of that Sacred Heart that loved us so truly and so deeply.

Second Day - January 23, 1941

After this instruction I shall begin hearing confessions. A few words on your preparation for confession.

- 1 - Pray for God's help.
- 2.- ~~Examine~~ your conscience.
- 3 - Excite yourself to sorrow for your sins. A good way to excite your self to sorrow is to look first at heaven, then at hell, and then at the Cross. Make your Way of the Cross before confession to obtain sorrow for your sins.
4. - A firm purpose of amendment.



First Instruction

During this instruction we are going to consider a few thoughts on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass so that we may understand it better and follow it more closely when we attend it. I wish to offer my sincere congratulations to you for the manner in which you follow your Mass here - that of the Missa Recitata where you answer the prayers of the Mass and keep united with the priest throughout. The best method of hearing Mass is to use a missal. However, there are other methods which we may use. We may say the rosary, if we wish and in this way keep united to our suffering Saviour. Here is another suggestion.

" Adore to the Gospel,  
Give thanks to the bell.  
Till Communion ask pardon,  
Then all your wants tell."

The Mass is essentially a sacrifice. Why is sacrifice so important? In all religions which last - from the beginning of the world to the present time - we find that sacrifice was an essential element. We find that all had an altar, a priesthood and a sacrifice. A priest is one who offers sacrifice. We are all priests and priestesses in that we all have the duty of offering sacrifice. Your chief work in life is to offer sacrifice on the altar of your heart. You'll be more beautiful in life if you learn to sacrifice, to surrender to give up. If you wish to have a beautiful soul, you'll have to learn to suffer. Take the example of a diamond - the lamp black is subjected to great heat and pressure in order that the beautiful diamond may be released. Take also the example of the smashing of an atom in order to obtain the power of electricity. When God smashes you by sending you suffering, trials, and diffi-



culties, He's trying to see what you are made of. Look at the beauty of the soul of our Blessed Mother - see how she suffered during the Passion of her Divine Son - and through this suffering how she pleased Her Son. Look at the suffering of Christ Himself during His sacred Passion. OH' if we could only realize what suffering really means. How else but through a braken heart can the Lord Christ enter into us - or how else but through suffering and a broken heart can the deepest part of us get out to God. We see at the altar in a visible manner what we must do ourselves in an invisible manner.

The chief thought of the Mass - TheMass was the first Passion Play. On Calvary, our Lord's Body was on the cross, His Precious Blood shed on the ground. The priest raises the sacred Host at Mass - Our Lord's Body; he raises the chalice - Our Lord's Sacred Blood. I must go back to life and see how much I can separate myself from myself. Life is a process not of getting things but of giving things.

If we wish to rise in our spiritual life like a stratosphere rises in the air, we must cut the ropes which bind us to earth and throw overboard our self-love. Sacrifice helps us to rise. Life is like a beauty shop - a spiritual beauty shop - where the defects are erased or removed so that our soul may be more beautiful. The cross is the big sign of our religion. If you are a real Christian you must know what the cross means. If God sends us the cross, we must receive it and kiss it with love. When trouble comes to you, don't say "Why does God send me this?" God is sending you a chance or an opportunity for you to become more beautiful. Remember that a minus sign means taking away something. A plus sign forms a cross. Every cross which is sent to us is a plus sign for us - a chance for us to merit grace. We often speak of misfortunes



which come to us. Did you ever stop to realize that the word "misfortune" is really a "Mis (s) Fortune" which is coming to you? When we recite the litany of our troubles, we are really reciting the litany of our good fortune. One thing we all in common is that of sacrifice. God - our good and tender Father - faced suffering and sacrifice first before He has asked us to do so. He faced it and bore it for love of us. He suffered more than we can ever be called upon to suffer. There is entirely too much self-pity in the world to-day. Let us in imitation of our suffering Saviour rejoice when He calls upon us to suffer something for Him and let us look upon sufferings as blessed opportunities He gives us to prove our love for Him.

#### SECOND INSTRUCTION - 11:00

We shall study this morning the Personality of the greatest leader the world has ever known - that of our gentle Saviour - Jesus Christ. We Catholics are inclined to emphasize the Divinity of Christ and to neglect the human side of Christ. We must get acquainted with His lovable and loving Human Nature.

Why is it that George Washington is enshrined in the hearts of all Americans? Is it because he was the first president of the United States? Not at all. We esteem him because of that, yes - but when we see him at Valley Forge, suffering with his men the cold of the winter, praying to almighty God for success - then we realize how admirable and lovable he really was. We recall too the incident of the brave boy who would not tell a lie to his father - who owned up to the fact that he had chopped down the cherry tree. It is the same with Abraham Lincoln. We see him studying by candle light, trying to improve himself. We see him granting a reprieve to the soldier who was condemned to death because he was found sleeping at his post. We see his mercy and his love for his fellow men in this. It is these perfectly human qualities which cause us to love so greatly these two great men of our country.



If God is to be loved as He should, we must get better acquainted with His charming Personality. Oh! if we could only ask our Blessed Mother to describe the personality of her Divine Son, how dearly would we grow to know Him and to love Him. The one outstanding fact is that all virtues come to full bloom in Christ. No one virtue stands out. He possessed all virtues in their full entirety. We are lop-sided in the possession of our virtues. We have our good qualities but our bad ones as well. Christ had no weak side - that is why He is so hard to understand. If you want to become a well balanced character, do not go to extremes. Take care to develop all your faculties - your body, your mind, and your soul. Get a certain amount of physical exercise every day. Try to have a fluid personality. You know that water takes the shape of the container. A fluid personality is one which bends to different circumstances. Be what the boys would call "a good scout." Many times, out of pure charity, give up your own will and do what your companions wish.

We may ask ourselves the question: "What does Christ look like?" The gospels tell us nothing of His personal appearance. A saintly nun to whom our Lord has appeared has said that Christ looks like the picture of Him which was painted by Hoffman in his famous "Agony in the Garden." Use your imagination in picturing Christ to yourself. Picture Him as your dearest friend - your Pal - your Buddy. Another saintly nun to whom Christ appeared has said that He always appeared with His Sacred <sup>anna</sup> Hands outstretched as though to embrace all mankind. Christ was rugged in body and soul but no one was ever more tender and merciful than He was. Ask yourself what you admire in a person. Then see all those qualities beautifully exemplified in Christ. Is it courage you admire? Look at the wonderful courage of Christ - His great physical courage - His great moral courage? Is it kindness, loyalty, love? No matter what the virtue may be - you will find



it exemplified in Christ. All virtues are most beautifully expressed in His life. Have you ever heart the poem "The Song of the Mystic" which was written by Father Ryan? It expresses beautifully the earnest desire and the ardent longing of the soul which is seeking for Christ. Read the poem carefully and study it thoughtfully. You, too, will hear a voice calling you, calling you to life of friendship and intimate union - that voice will be the voice of the adorable God - Man, that of Christ.



SONG OF THE MYSTIC

by Rev. Abram J. Ryan

I walk down the Velley of Silence--  
Down the dim, voiceless valley--alone!  
And I hear not the fall of a footstep  
Around me, save God's and my own;  
And the hush of my heart is as holy  
As hovers where angels have flown!

Long ago was I weary of voices  
Whose music my heart could not win;  
Long ago was I weary of noises  
That fretted my soul with their din:  
Long ago was I weary of places  
Where I met but the human--and sin.

I walked in the world with the worldly;  
I craved what the world never gave;  
And I said: "In the world each Ideal,  
That shines like a star on life's wave,  
Is wrecked on the shores of the Real,  
And sleeps like a dream in a grave."

And still did I pine for the Perfect,  
And still found the False with the True;  
I sought 'mid the Human for Heaven,  
But caught a mere glimpse of its Blue:  
And I wept when the clouds of the Mortal  
Veiled even that glimpse from my view.



And I toiled on, heart-tired, of the Human,  
And I moaned 'mid the mazes of men,  
Till I knelt, long ago, at an altar  
And I heard a voice call me. Since then  
I walk down the Valley of Silence  
That lies far beyond mortal ken.

Do you ask what I found in the Valley?  
'Tis my Trysting Place with the Divine.  
And I fell at the feet of the Holy,  
And above me a voice said: "Be mine."  
And there arose from the depths of my spirit  
An echo--"My heart shall be Thine."

Do you ask how I live in the Valley?  
I weep--and I dream--and I pray.  
But my tears are as sweet as the dewdrops  
That fall on the roses in May;  
And my prayer, like a perfume from censers,  
Ascendeth to God night and day.

In the hush of the Valley of Silence  
I dream all the songs that I sing;  
And the music floats down the dim Valley,  
Till each finds a word for a wing,  
That to hearts, like the Dove of the Deluge,  
A message of Peace they may bring.



But far on the deep there are billows  
That never shall break on the beach;  
And I have heard songs in the Silence  
That never shall float into speech;  
And I have had dreams in the Valley  
Too lofty for language to reach.

And I have seen Thoughts in the Valley--  
Ah! me, how my spirit was stirred!  
And they wear holy veils on their faces,  
Their footsteps can scarcely be heard;  
They pass through the Valley like virgins,  
Too pure for the touch of a word!

Do you ask me the place of the Valley,  
Ye hearts that are harrowed by Care?  
It lieth afar between mountains,  
And God and His angels are there:  
And one is the dark mount of Sorrow,  
And one the bright mountain of Prayer.



THIRD INSTRUCTION - 2:30

Love of God and Sanctity

The love of God should be the basis or motive of all that we do. At certain periods in the history of the Church, we find that leaders made fear rather than love the dominant idea. If we recall the teachings of the Quakers and the Puritans in the early days of the history of our country, we shall see how this affected the lives of the people. With the Puritans and the Quakers, many things which we now do commonly on Sundays were considered very grave offences. To play checkers, to romp on the lawn and other similar things were forbidden on Sunday. Likewise there arose in the Church a false doctrine which is known as Jansenism. The author of this doctrine was a man by the name of Jansenius. People began to feel that they could never be worthy of receiving Holy Communion. Even religious were not allowed to receive our Lord every day - they could do so only three or four times a week and then they had to have special permission. Our Lord gave the saintly Pope Pius X the grace to realize the error which had crept into the Church which was keeping men from going to Christ. Pius X gave the little ones the privilege and permission to receive Our Lord at an early age - and this is as it should be. They in their innocence are certainly in the proper condition to receive our Lord. Pope Pius X also predicted that there would arise many saintly children who would become Child Saints. This has been seen in the lives of little Guy de Fontgallon, little Anne, Maria of Padua, etc.

The gospel of sanctity has once more been restored to the Church. A saint is a person who is perfect in all virtues, a saint is charitable, humble, patient, kind, cheerful, etc. It takes a saint to live with most of us. If we are not perfect here on earth, we shall have to become perfect in purgatory. All are called to sanctity. You will be a saint or a devil for all eternity. We shall



love or hate for all eternity. It is a case of "either" "or!" We must make a full and complete surrender of ourselves to God.

There are many false notions concerning sanctity. Some people consider sanctity a matter of visions, emotions, etc. Religion is a matter of the intellect and the will rather than of the emotions. It is true, nevertheless, that our emotions are never so beautiful as those connected with love and with religion. The test of real love of God is constancy, and steadfastness in our service and love of Him. Miracles are not necessary, neither are severe corporal punishments such as the taking of the discipline or the wearing of the hair-shirt. All of these have their place - but they are not essential to sanctity.

I shall give you now a "slow movie" of a modern saint. Let us take a boy for example. The bell rings in the morning; he jumps out of bed at the first sound of the bell; he kneels down and says his morning prayers. He goes to Mass and receives Holy Communion daily. Perhaps he has a long distance to walk to church but he makes no complaint about this. He returns home for breakfast - perhaps the coffee is cold, he says nothing but "This is for you, dear Lord." Then he goes to school. Here he does his best to pay attention to his teacher and to accomplish his duties well. At recreation time, he plays fair and square, he is cheerful and kind to all. He obeys his parents and his teachers cheerfully for he realizes that all authority comes from God. He is patient and kind to all, humble and always ready to be of help to others. We can recognize here a modern saint - one who is pleasing to God - and who loves him with his whole heart and soul.

God has made of all us potentially saints. We all have the makings of saints within us. Let us establish in our own lives the ideal of becoming a saint. If our life is not a success in this, it is really a failure. If we succeed in this, we are benefitting all with whom we come



in contact, warming and cheering everything which we touch. This should be our ideal - and it is within our power aided by the grace of almighty God to reach it.

#### FOURTH INSTRUCTION - 4:00

#### METHODS OF REACHING SANCTITY

There are three ways of reaching sanctity

##### 1st - THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religious life is a state of perfection. The life is so organized that it will produce sanctity if one is faithful to its regulations. The life is centered around three virtues.

##### A - Poverty -

Poverty is a virtue by which the religious renounces all right or proprietorship to the goods of this earth. This eliminates all financial worries and enables one to have the freedom to pursue the higher life.

##### B - Chastity

Marriage creates more problems than it solves. Marriage is a distraction. When a girl marries, her life is filled with worries about "in-laws" and out-laws." The vow of chastity in religious life simplifies this and makes the heart free to concentrate itself on God.

##### C - Obedience

Most people <sup>way</sup> in the world are self-willed and wish their own about things.. A headstrong or self-willed person is one who thinks he knows it all. He is set straight for failure. Obedience controls this by making one dependent upon the will of a superior - thus by going the will of a superior, a religious does the will of God.



If a religious is faithful to her three vows, she is on the road to sanctity. The happiest people that I know in the world are religious. They receive here below the hundred-fold which our Lord promises to them and in heaven they shall receive life everlasting. The greatest blessing God can give you is the grade of a religious vocation.

## 2nd - Vocation to the Married State

Don't expect too much from the marriage state. We have many examples of married people who became saints, for example, St. Monica, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, St. Thomas More. However it costs too much to become a canonized saint - don't aim to be that. Aim to be the saint whom God alone knows. Compare marriage with the three vows of religion. Most married people do not take a vow of poverty but they live it sometimes far more so than religious do. As for chastity, if a married person observes his obligations as he or she should, he practices a spirit of restraint which approximates the vow of chastity. As for obedience, no novice mistress is more severe in her orders to her novices than many married person are to their partners.

## 3rd - Vocation to Unmarried Life in the World

Don't let the morbid fear of being an old maid lead you or rather drive you into an unhappy marriage. People in this class are sometimes very careless about their personal appearance. They develop into persons who are bored with themselves and the world in general. It is a good thing to interest ourselves in hobbies or avocations of one kind or another. If you are not interested in people, people will not be interested in you - and it will be your own fault. Snap out of it - the quicker, the better. Many people in this class lead a lonely life. Loneliness is a beautiful opportunity of getting closer to Christ. Recognize the hand of Christ if you are lonely and draw close to His loving Heart. (N.B.\* Special article written by Father Cwarking on "Loneliness" is enclosed at the end of these notes.)



THIRD DAY ... JAN. 24, 1941

First Instruction - 9:00

RULE OF LIFE

This morning I am going to give you a little rule of life which I have entitled "Planks of Salvation." I have used this little card in missions and retreats which I have preached. You would be surprised at the number of people who have pledged themselves to live up to these seven planks of salvation. In one parish alone, over five hundred people handed in their card. Let us look at these seven points and see if we, too, cannot live up to them. If you wish to do so, some time during the day, sign your name to the pledge for sanctity and give it to Sister.

1. - Attend Mass and receive Holy Communion as frequently as possible.

The saints knew that their strength lay not in their own hearts but in the Sacred Heart of Christ. You are as Christian as you are eucharistic. Try to be charitable, humble, and kind. Fall in love with Christ and He will do the rest. Daily communion is the ideal. Nothing better could be said of you at death than that you were a daily communicant. We go to Holy Communion not as a reward for virtue but because we realize that we are not good and we wish to obtain goodness from our Eucharistic King.

2. - Recite at least a part of the rosary every day.

Bind yourself to Mary with the chains of the rosary. I would suggest that you possess at least three pairs of rosary beads. Let one of these be a cheap pair if you wish but one which you will keep always in your bedroom so that you will have them handy at night. Keep them under your pillow so that you will not have to look for them when you go to bed. Have a second pair always on your



person, either in your pocket or in your purse. If you should ever happen to be in an accident, they may win absolution for you for people will recognize that you are a Catholic and will call a priest. Let the third pair be a most beautiful rosary so that it will elevate your thoughts and inspire you with a great love and devotion to "the beautiful lady in blue."

" A DECADE A DAY KEEPS THE DEVIL AWAY."

( During the question box period held daily in the high school study hall, a question was asked concerning the naming of the mysteries as we say the rosary. The question was to the effect that was the same indulgence gained when the mysteries were not named as when they were. Father answered that in order to gain the indulgences attached to the recitation of the rosary, it was necessary to name the mystery and to meditate upon it. Meditation upon the mystery is necessary. Then he gave the following beautiful thought concerning the rosary. " The rosary is a tour through the realms of mental prayer conducted personally by our Blessed Mother."

3. - Have a regular confessor.

In confession, I want information, inspiration and consolation. If I am open with my confessor I shall get it. Don't try to master the game of life without a coach or a guide. Our confessor is an ideal confidante. He can be a wonderful consolation to us. He is a man taking the place of Christ - he represents Christ to us - and he is filled with the wisdom of the mind of Christ. Father Faber has said that having a regular confessor is one-half the battle. A priest must get to know you and to know your soul before he can really help you. Get rid of vanity, do not go from priest to priest for confession. Be humble, open, frank, and sincere with a regular confessor and he will be of great help to you.



4. - Read something spiritual every day.

Spiritual reading is the oil of the lamp of prayer. - Girls, learn to balance your spiritual diet. See to it that in your home there are Catholic magazines, books and papers. The world at present has a case of acidosis in regard to reading matter. Give God the break. Try to make a ten minutespiritual reading every day.

5. - Make a yearly retreat.

A yearly retreat is a wonderful thing to help us keep close to God. No matter how good we may be, we will always finds weeds growing the garden of soul. A retreat wakes us up to the fact and makes us see what is wrong with us. If you cannot make a retreat, make a mission or a novena. There are many places now where retreats can easily be made. Mayslake, Notre Dame, The Cenacle.

6. - Endeavor to perform your ordinary duties of every day life extraordinarily well.

We should try to perform the ordinary humdrum duties of everyday life with extraordinary care with special attention to charity. People do not see the "rose in the prose" of every day life. Monotony is the biggest obstacle to sanctity. Sanctity many mean for us the facing daily the duties of each day for love of God. Our daily duties are filled with many and wonderful opportunities for proving our loveof God. Mary's life at Nazareth was far great than her life at Bethlehem or Calvary becausee there she conquered monotony. Mary is the Queen of All Saints because she did her ordinary duties extraordinarily well. Most of us will not be called upon inlife to perform heroic acts but we are all called to perform our daily duties and if we perform these to the best of our ability owe can thus sancitfy our daily life and perhaps attain to a high degree of sanctity in our spiritual life.



7. - To attend meetings of some organization which sustains this rule of life.

To enable ourselves to remain faithful to our own rule of life, it is well to associate ourselves with others who believe as we do and who follow the same principles. Accustom yourself to associate with those who want to lead a good life. The Little Flower, St. Therese of the Child Jesus, is the great inspiration of modern sanctity. Give God a blank check and let Him fill it in.

SECOND INSTRUCTION - 11:00

Spiritual evil is worse than material evil. If we really want to be patriotic and help our country in the terrible struggle going on in the world to-day, we shall live up to our religion. There are about 80,000,000 Americans who don't go to Church at all. Embrace a real Christian life and give a good example to all around you. Live up to the red, white, and blue of our flag by your courage, your purity, and your loyalty to God and country.

This morning we shall consider the subject of worry. Worry is unchristian. Our youth of to-day are not carefree. The element of worry is a large one in their lives. What do we mean by the word "worry?" If we look up the meaning in the dictionary we shall find that Webster says worry as a verb means to fret and to chafe; as a noun it means undue solicitude. The great St. Paul has said: "To those who love God, all things work together unto good." Life is made up of the red of pain, the blue of pain, the purple of sorrow, and the gold of joy. Shakespeare tells us that sometimes you must be cruel in order to be kind.

Worry is a kind of sin, a sin against hope, a violation of trust. Remember that Moses hesitated just a moment when God told him to strike the rock for water and because of that moment



of hesitation and confidence in God, he was not permitted to lead the Chosen people to the Promised Land. Our Lord has said: "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Do your best with each duty every day and leave the rest to God. Do not worry about it. Our dear Lord Himself fought worry in his Agony in the Garden. Finally He conquered it by His : " Fiat." Thy Will, not Mine, be done." He surrendered all to His Heavenly Father.

There was once upon a time a man who had severe misfortunes happen to him but he was always cheerful under them. One day, his horse was stolen and when his neighbors came to offer him sympathy, he answered them: " Oh; that is not so bad. Let's wait and see what happens." In a few days, his horse returned home bringing with him several wild horses. The neighbors then came to congratulate the man upon his good fortune. He answered: "Well, I don't know if this is good fortune or not. Let's wait and see." A few days later his son was trying to break in one of the horses and was thrown from the horse with the consequence that he broke his leg. The neighbors came again offering their sympathy for the man's bad fortune. Again he told them that he didn't know if this was a bad fortune or a good one. " Let's wait and see." Shortly after this, war was declared and all the young men of the vicinity were called to battle. The young man who had the broken leg was of course spared. One again the neighbors came offering their congratulations. Again the man answered: Well, it was not much a misfortune in the beginning after all, was it?"

Let us follow his example. Let us wait and see. Something you fear to-day may be a source of good to-morrow. Worry is a bigger problem to-day than it has ever been before. Our life is too highly geared, too sped up, Modern man is under a tension most of the time. One-half the hospitals beds in our land are filled by nervous cases. We should have a living trust in Almighty God. You will never find a saint with a nervous breakdown. Trust is an emotional safety valve. It breaks down



the pressure. Let us remember that God will provide. He doesn't send us trials and difficulties without sending us the accompanying graces. Let us turn all our worries over to Him. First do what you can to solve your own problems, secondly, pray for the grace to overcome them, and third, trust in the providence of God. Our trust can never be too great. Do not think that our Lord does not wish us to turn over all our difficulties to Him. He is eagerly waiting for us to turn to Him and in His great mercy and love, He is ready and happy to take care of us.

### THIRD INSTRUCTION - 3:00

It's a strange thing how seldom we think of our perfect home in heaven. People have many and strange ideas concerning heaven. Children, for example, picture it frequently as the satisfaction of all they could desire upon earth - all the candy, all the ice cream, etc. which they could possibly wish for, they expect to find there. Indians picture it as the "happy hunting ground."

We shall no doubt have many surprises in heaven. First of all, we shall be surprised to find some people missing whom we expected to find there. Secondly we may find some people whom we had not expected to find. Thirdly, we shall be surprised to find ourselves there.

Let us put aside all crude pictures of heaven and try to picture to ourselves some true idea of what it really is. St. Paul has told us: "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the mind of man what things God has prepared for those who love Him."

1. - Heaven is indescribable. We can never fully picture the great joys of heaven.

2. - The chief joy - the Beatific Vision of God. The enviable position of being rapturously, ecstatically in love with God. You'll never tire there



of loving God.

### 3. - The Joys of the Five Senses

The joys of the senses in heaven will be of a higher kind than that of earth. Think of the joys of friendship. In heaven, we shall love with a perfect love. We'll be so much in love with God, so much united with the will of God, that we shall will only what He wills. Human love and human friendship are given us by God as a pre-view of the joys of heaven. Isn't it a tragic thing that our friends can be the means of keeping us out of heaven.

Consider the great joys of the intellect. Men consider all the "ologies" but theology. In heaven there will be different degrees of glory. We often picture this by filling different sized glasses with water. Each glass is filled and holds as much as it can. It is similar with us in heaven - the capacity of different souls will vary, the same as the size of the glasses vary - but each soul will have as much happiness as it is capable of. A long life time of suffering is not too much to pay for one additional degree of glory in heaven. Perfect happiness is not to be found here on earth. God has reserved this beyond the grave for those who are true to Him.

Final Sermon - 4:00

Retreat closed with Holy Hour

Love and be loved. Love is the law of the human heart. That God has loved you and dwells within you is the most beautiful compliment any one could ever make you. If I told you that someone loved you, you would respond with great emotion and would love in return. If you feel not a spark of love or if you return not the love when I tell you that God loves you, you do not know who God is.



## REASONS FOR OUR LOVE

1. - Creation - God loved you more than many thousands of countless other creatures whom He could have created who no doubt would have loved Him with a far greater love than you do. Yet, He create you. Love is whimsical and capricious. God's fancy turned to you. The Divine Love Call came out to you and you were called into existence. There was never a time in all the history of the world when God did not know you and love you. From century to century, from age to age, across the waste of years, God loved you with an everlasting love.

2. - Love of God infinite. Think of all the persons on earth who love you, of your parents, your brothers and sisters, your relatives, friends, teachers, classmates, etc. God loves you more, a million times more than any of them could possibly love you. His Incarnation proves His infinite love for us. There is no place where you are known so perfectly and loved so intimately as in the Heart of Christ. Love always winces at separation. God emptied Himself - nothing more could He do to win your love, except to force it from you and this He will not do. Divine Love has done all It can to win your love - nothing has it left undone.

3. - All created things - a sign language whereby God speaks to our hearts. Everything in the world tells of His love for us. The sunset is the painting of the story of the glory of His love for us. The flowers - every petal of every flower says to us : " He loves me." Think of the loveliness, the delicacy, the beauty of His love for you. God is the first one to say : " Love it with flowers." Music is the most spiritual of all arts. The themes of all beautiful music is the love of Him, Who gave man the love of song. I can repeat over and over again to myself: " Somebody loves me, Somebody who really is Someone loves me." If the meaning of these words really sinks into our heart and soul, it will make all the difference in



the world to us. The greatest truth of all truths is this of the great love of God for us. It is sufficient to make saints of all of us. I leave you to open your heart to this love - and you will find the answer in your own heart. This love of God for us is too beautiful a truth for man to tell. The final thought I wish to leave with you is that of St. John. " Let us love God because He hath first loved us."